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FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR COUNSELING RESEARCH.

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COUNSELING RESEARCH SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO DISCOVER IMPROVED WAYS OF HELPING CLIENTS PREVENT OR SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS. THE IMPLICIT ASSUMPTION THAT COUNSELORS ALREADY KNOW HOW TO COUNSEL SHOULD BE QUESTIONED. THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE SHOULD BE CLIENT, NOT COUNSELOR BEHAVIOR. A NARROW OUTLOOK OF COUNSELOR PURPOSES AND METHODS MAY BE DANGEROUS. COUNSELING RESEARCH SHOULD BE DESIGNED SO THAT DIFFERENT POSSIBLE OUTCOMES LEAD TO DIFFERENT COUNSELING PRACTICES. RESEARCH SHOULD GAIN THE RESPECT OF OTHER DISCIPLINES. THE TEST OF RELEVANCE SHOULD BE APPLIED IN PLANNING COUNSELING RESEARCH. OUTCOME CRITERIA OF COUNSELING RESEARCH SHOULD BE TAILORED TO THE BEHAVIOR CHANGES DESIRED BY THE CLIENTS AND COUNSELORS INVOLVED. THE CRITERION FOR EACH CLIENT SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE. GROSS CRITERION MEASURES, SUCH AS GRADE POINT AVERAGE, HAVE DANGEROUS WEAKNESSES. CRITERION BEHAVIOR EXTERNAL TO THE COUNSELING SITUATION ITSELF IS IRRELEVANT. THERE ARE SEVEN POSSIBLE FRUITFUL AREAS FOR COUNSELING RESEARCH--(1) ESTABLISHING THE COUNSELOR AS AN EFFECTIVE AGENT OF CHANGE THROUGH ALTERNATIVE WAYS, (2) LEARNING THE SKILLS OF BUILDING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, (3) HELPING MEMBERS OF SPECIFIC SUBPOPULATIONS THROUGH MORE EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES, (4) EXTRAPOLATING FROM RESEARCH IN OTHER DISCIPLINES, (5) BUILDING A LIBRARY OF EFFECTIVE MODELS, (6) IMPROVING THE CAREER DECISION PROCESS, AND (7) PREVENTING PROBLEMS. (WR)

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Future Directions for Counseling Research[1]

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A little over a year ago because of some family connections I attended the annual convention of the American Dental Association in San Francisco. While waiting for the family to reassemble one afternoon, I happened to be seated outside one of the meeting rooms and overheard a conversation which seems now to have particular relevance for research in counseling. I shall try to reproduce the conversation as nearly as I can remember it while admitting fully that perceptual distortions can occur. The conversation went something like this:

"I missed that last session, but I heard some of the fellows muttering on the way out. Is it true that research has proved dentists are unnecessary?"

"Just that they make no significant difference."

"How did they prove that?"

"Had five dentists cooperating. Out of 20 patients calling each dentist, ten picked at random were asked to wait six months. The other ten were given appointments immediately."

"So what happened then?"

"A year later both groups were examined, and both groups had about the same average number of teeth, about the same average annual income, and were about equally happy when asked to respond on a seven-point rating scale."

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"Weren't there any differences?"
"There was <u>almost</u> a significant difference on one rating scale."
"What one?"
"Degree of respect toward dentistry as a profession."
"Well, at least there's a trend in our favor."
"Nope, control group had more respect."
"Now wait a minute. This kind of research is ridiculous. You can't tell me dentists don't do any good. Why, I know a little girl with a cleft palate whose speech could scarcely be understood. She was shy and withdrawn, teased by her playmates, and some of her teachers thought she was mentally retarded. Then a dental surgeon produced a prosthesis to close the gap in the soft palate and enabled her to speak normally. You should hear this girl tell what a tremendous difference it made in her life."
"Significant at what percent level? That's only testimonial evidence. No respectable journal would publish anecdotes like that in this scientific age."
"You think this fancy research project is pretty good, don't you?"
"Well, it's going to be published."
"There is one fundamental thing wrong with it."
"What's that?"
"It makes no significant difference."
"What do you mean?"
"It makes no difference that the results are negative, and it would make no difference if the results had been positive. Furthermore, it was obvious from the beginning that a study like this could not possibly advance dental science one bit, no matter how it came out."
"You better explain yourself."
"OK, what are the dentists who heard about these negative results going to do differently from now on?"
"Nothing. They complained about the study--small N, irrelevant criteria (didn't even count the number of dental caries), need for a longer

follow-up interval, all that sort of thing. And besides they thought it didn't apply to them."

"Any of them threaten to quit dental practice because of this evidence?"

"Of course not."

"Now what do you suppose dentists would do differently if the results had been favorable?"

"Nothing different. But they would probably feel more self-satisfied about what they were already doing."

"Precisely. No matter which way the study came out, dentists would continue to do just what they've always done. We will never advance the dental profession by doing that kind of research."

"What kind of research do you think we should do?"

"Research that makes a difference in the effectiveness of what dentists do. We need better ways to remedy dental defects, help people care for their own teeth, and prevent dental problems."

"That's pretty general. Can you give any specific research problems which might affect what dentists do?"

"Sure. We need to know the optimum ratio of mercury to silver alloy in amalgum to achieve various objectives--hardness, adhesiveness, absence of discoloration. We need to know the effect of diet on tooth permanence. We need to know how to prevent the chemical imbalances in saliva that cause enamel dissolution or the precipitation of calculus. We need to know . . ."

"OK, OK. But what if we solve all these problems you were about to list? What would dentists do if all our preventive and remedial efforts were successful? We would be out of work."

"That is precisely the objective of the dental profession--to eliminate oral disease and thus eliminate the need for the current type of costly dental services. If we could ever solve all the problems of oral disease, we could turn our efforts toward new problems. Any true profession tries to reduce the need for its own services by preventing

or solving more efficiently the problems for which it assumes responsibility."

That was the conversation that I heard, or thought I heard, or perhaps dreamt. In any event, it started me thinking about the kind of research that I have been doing. How much of the research which I have done has actually made any difference for anyone's practice? For that matter, what difference has it made in terms of my own practice of counseling or teaching? I am forced to confess that a great deal of my own research has made absolutely no difference to anyone. It seems obvious now that I should have know so in the beginning.

As a result of this introspection and a review of counseling research, particularly that of the last three years, I have arrived at some conclusions which I shall present to you in the form of three propositions.

Proposition I: Counseling Research Should Be Designed to Discover Improved Ways of Helping Clients Prevent or Learn to Solve Their Problems.

The Implicit Assumption That We Already Know How to Counsel

Perhaps the most disturbing note running through the counseling literature is the implicit assumption that counselors already know the best way to be of assistance to each client. Many of the research studies we see attempt to evaluate counseling but give very little attention to exactly what it is that counselors do. Everyone seems to know implicitly what counselors do. If so, then the next step is to prove that what they do is good for something. The danger in this belief is that it may cause us to stop searching for new ways to help clients. If we are already convinced that we know the best way to help clients, the next job is to conduct research which will attempt to prove that "counseling" works better than nothing. Such research is futile no matter what the results.

When research efforts produce no significant differences between counseled and non-counseled subjects, we have a ready set of rationalizations. Perhaps counseling has long term effects. If only we could conduct a long

range follow-up, we would find greater effects. Criterion instruments can usually be blamed for part of the difficulty, and of course a larger N is always desirable.

Every now and then (Could it be about one time in twenty?) we do see studies which show significant differences. However, I do not wish to argue here whether counseling does or does not have any effect on clients. I think we are wasting our time even to ask if counseling has an effect. I personally am convinced on the basis of private evidence that counseling does have some effect on some clients for some kinds of behavior change. I am not interested in proving to the world that some generality known as counseling is generally effective for general clients. What I want to know is how counselors can do an even better job of helping their clients. It will not do us any good at all to find out that counseling as it is presently constituted is slightly better than nothing in helping clients. I am afraid that if we did receive some conclusive evidence of counseling's value, all efforts to improve the counseling process would cease.

In order to generate appropriate kinds of research problems, we need to begin with the problems of our clients. We need to ask for each client, "What is the problem that he is facing? What kind of behavior must he engage in if he is to resolve that problem? What are some of the alternative actions that the counselor can take that would help him to engage in that kind of behavior?"

The behavior changes desired by each individual client and his counselor constitute the foundation upon which our research must be based. To do anything else is to attempt to produce changes which are not necessarily desired by either the client or the counselor. But it is essential before research begins that we eliminate the idea that we already know how best to counsel. Instead, we need to consider some alternative ways of helping our clients attain their life desires.

Dependent Variable As Client, Not Counselor, Behavior

It seems almost too obvious to mention, but the target of counseling research ought to be the behavior of the client, not the behavior of the

counselor. Some technically excellent work has been done on the effect of alternative types of client behavior on the responses of the counselor. It may be of some general interest to know that when a client is hostile toward a counselor, the counselor emits certain types of anxiety responses. However, this would be useful information only if we were interested in training clients to make counselors anxious. A far more valuable research topic would be to determine what types of counselor responses make the client less anxious.

The idea of using coached clients to investigate counselor responses is deceptively attractive. It is attractive because of the ease of establishing rigorous experimental designs which may produce significant results. The deception is in the fact that the results do not actually advance the counselor's knowledge of what actions he may take to help his clients.

Another type of study that appears somewhat irrelevant to the client's welfare investigates the counselor's ability to predict certain patterns of client speech or other behavior. The purpose of counseling is not to predict what the client will say. Besides, Carkhuff's (1966) review of the evidence showed that increasing amounts of graduate training lower the ability to predict client behavior. If we really want to help people predict other people's behavior, we ought to be teaching that skill to the client, not just the counselor. However, it is apparent that we do not yet know how to predict other people's behavior any better than any other normally intuitive person. When we do learn how, we should list it as a skill some clients may wish to learn. Our research should testify that we work for the welfare of the client, not the counselor.

The Danger of a Narrow Outlook

Most modern industries in America are no longer tied to a single product or a single process. A company which manufactured buggy whips in 1890 might have been very prosperous at the time and even for several years thereafter, but if the company conceived of itself as being in the buggy whip manufacturing business, it was doomed to failure. It would have survived if it had conceived of its role as being in the transportation business. A far-sighted

buggy whip manufacturer would have said, "We are in the transportation bueiness, and therefore it is our job to manufacture those articles which enable people and goods to be transported as safely, quickly, and economically as possible." Thus, the advent of the automobile would be viewed as an opportunity to expand the product line rather than as a threat to financial security.

Right now we see the beginnings of a similar development in the book publishing business. Some book publishers are going to say, "We are in the book publishing business, our job is to manufacture books, and we view all other means of storing and transmitting words and images with hostility and suspicion." But far-sighted book companies are going to view themselves more broadly as part of the communications industry. They will ask how they can transmit pictorial and verbal images to the people who wish them most expeditiously. One example of this broader outlook is represented in the merger of the American Book Company with Litton Industries. The development of computers, copying machines, and random access microfilm storage files foretells a fundamental revolution in what used to be the publishing industry, but is now the communications industry.

We are faced with a similar danger, or opportunity, in the field of counseling. In the face of innovations we may be tempted to reply, "We are in the counseling profession. Our job is to counsel. We must provide one counselor who will be available to talk at least X number of hours each year with each individual." We must not take such a narrow view of our function. We would be much more likely to promote the welfare of clients, counselors and citizens if we were to view ourselves as part of the education industry.

It is our job to help our clients learn. For a variety of reasons many of them have failed to learn some of the basic things which enable them to function in society. Our job is to promote, somehow, the learning that must be accomplished. Right now we have some ideas how it might be accomplished through a process called counseling. Perhaps someday someone will develop improved ways for helping to promote this new learning. When better ways are developed, far-sighted counselors will eagerly test them, adopt

them if they work, and continue to improve them.

Counselors are in the businessof promoting behavior changes along certain dimensions just as classroom teachers are in the business of promoting behavior changes along certain other dimensions. We go by many different titles--professors, teachers, counselors, psychologists, administrators, psychotherapists, and even psychiatrists, but fundamentally we are all in the same business, that of helping our clients learn those things necessary for their own welfare. Our research must improve the process.

Proposition II: Counseling Research Should Be Designed So That Different Possible Outcomes Lead to Different Counseling Practices.

When I was a young and naive graduate student at the University of Minnesota, I soon became duly impressed with the importance of using the proper experimental design, the right statistic for the necessary assumptions, the need for properly validated measurement instruments, and the necessity of choosing a representative sample. So much effort was involved in learning these aspects of research that it was not until later that I really appreciated the far more important lesson from my graduate training, namely: If you ask the wrong question, no amount of statistical sophistication can make the results valuable. Let's consider some of the factors which keep us from asking the "right" questions and how we might increase our ability to ask questions which will make a difference.

Research Which Gains the Respect of Other Disciplines

Sometimes we read surveys which report that counseling psychology ranks toward the bottom of the prestige hierarchy within the field of psychology. Some of us have felt tangible effects of being at the bottom of the pecking order in the psychological community. We are bothered by this and sometimes protest (usually to other counseling psychologists) that we are entitled to just as much respect as any other type of psychologist. But respect cannot be requested; it cannot be demanded; and it cannot even be legislated. Respect is earned, and it is earned by demonstrated competency in mastering the problems in one's own field.

A fundamental mistake has been to model our research after the research of some of the academic disciplines. Much of this research is "knowledge for its own sake" (or facts gathered for no known reason). (Actually, of course, good researchers in other disciplines gather facts for very good reasons, usually to provide evidence to support or disconfirm a possibly useful theory.) It is a temptation to adopt the apparent policy of those who have more prestige than we have and therefore to conduct research which has no known practical benefit. Much of the research which I read in our professional journals appears to be just of this type, collections of facts (seldom even interesting facts) which make no possible difference in the practice of counseling.

It is not our job to amass knowledge for its own sake. Our job is to improve the practice of counseling for the welfare of our clients. The facts we collect should be those which make some kind of a difference in what counselors do. We will gain the respect of other disciplines when we put our own house in order and accomplish the purposes for which we work. We will not gain the respect of other disciplines by becoming a superficial imitation of a basic science while at the same time counseling practice and counseling research bear no relationship to each other.

New junior colleges are being established and sometimes they begin by modeling themselves after some prestigeful university. Although the primary purpose of the junior college is to provide adult and terminal education for many students who would not benefit from a traditional curriculum, policies and courses are often instituted in an attempt to model the high prestige institution. High standards are set in irrelevant courses, many students fail, and for some strange reason this high failure rate is viewed with pride. The basic difficulty is that an inappropriate model had been chosen. The junior colleges which are gaining the most respect are those which are accomplishing their own purposes most effectively. Those which are providing meaningful courses, stimulating teachers, and relevant occupational training have won the respect, not only of the general public, but of responsible

professional persons at the major universities also. Demonstrated competence in accomplishing one's own purposes is the route to attaining respect from others.

Counseling research will begin to earn the respect it deserves when the results of that research begin to improve counselors' abilities to help their clients.

Nothing that I have said up to this point should be interpreted to mean that I oppose the seeking of knowledge for its own sake. Many scientific advances and technological improvements have occurred unexpectedly from scientific attempts merely to achieve a better understanding of some phenomenon. Such fundamental research will continue, should continue, and indeed must continue. Counseling psychologists have an obligation to keep in contact with that basic research which may possibly have relevance for developments in the field of counseling. If, from time to time, the counseling psychologist should wish to contribute to this fundamental research, no one ought to object. However, if we make our primary research activity the development of knowledge unrelated to the improvement of counseling practice, then I think we are neglecting the first responsibility of counseling researchers. The first order of business is finding out what we need to know in order to improve the practice of counseling.

The Test of Relevance in Planning Research

C. H. Patterson (1966) has written, "To be <u>engaged</u> in research is almost an end in itself, and one can actually continue, sometimes for years, doing research without having to show what he has accomplished, or to demonstrate the value of any results" (p. 130). I agree strongly with Patterson that such trivial research has many unfortunate consequences for the entire profession. The solution that I see, however, is not to give more importance to theory and discussion but to increase the relevance of the research that we do.

To this end I would suggest that in the planning stage of every doctoral dissertation and research proposal in the field of counseling the test of

relevance be applied. The test of relevance consists of asking one simple question and probing the answers: <u>What will counselors do differently if the results of this research come out one way rather than another?</u>

Suppose a doctoral candidate proposes a research study on some problem in test interpretation. He wonders how accurately parents can estimate the relative test results of their own children. He has developed a whole series of hypotheses that parents will be able to estimate certain abilities more accurately than other abilities, certain personality traits more accurately than other personality traits. Let us now apply the test of relevance. First question: "Suppose you find that parents are able to estimate their own children's verbal ability significantly better than they are able to estimate their own children's mathematical ability, what would counselors do differently as a result?" Second question: "Now suppose that you find that parents are just as able to predict their own child's mathematical ability as they are to estimate verbal ability, what would counselors do differently as a result of that finding?" If it turns out, as I expect it would, that counselors would do just exactly the same thing regardless of which way the results came out, then that proposed research is not really relevant to the field of counseling psychology. It may be a contribution to some type of basic knowledge, and it may be a publishable research study. But if we allow that research to be conducted, we will have lost one more opportunity to improve the practice of counseling, and we will have taught one more student that research is merely academic calesthenics and need not contribute to solving real problems. A job that is not worth doing at all is not worth doing well.

But the test of relevance can be taken one more step to make it a help in constructing new research problems, not merely a way of eliminating irrelevant proposals. The extension consists of asking what possible alternative counselor actions might be taken as a result of having the proposed additional information. Let's consider the research study done by MacQuiddy (1964) concerned with a problem of test interpretation. MacQuiddy, in

essence, asked the question: If counselors know how accurately each parent had estimated each ability of his child, would he interpret the results of the testing any differently to the parents? More specifically, if a counselor knows that a parent has estimated some of his child's abilities quite accurately but is markedly wrong in estimating certain others, and assuming that the counselor would like the parent to accept the results of the testing, should the counselor begin by interpreting first the score that the parent has estimated most accurately, or should he begin by interpreting the most discrepant test score? MacQuiddy arranged for several school psychologists to interpret to parents their child's test results after first obtaining the parents' own estimates of their child's abilities. MacQuiddy's hypothesis was that parents would accept the results of the testing more readily if counselors began by interpreting the score which the parent had estimated most closely, then interpreting the scores that were increasingly discrepant until the last score interpreted was the score that the parent had missed by the greatest amount. The results were surprising, for they came out in just the opposite direction from that hypothesized. The parents who accepted the results most thoroughly were those in the group which received the most discrepant score first. Those whose judgment was initially confirmed were least willing to accept the test results.

This study is cited, not as an example of an earthshaking experiment, but as an example of a study which can affect the practice of counseling in some small way. If I were a counselor interpreting a group of test scores to parents, and if I had some prior knowledge of what the parents thought their children's abilities were, and if I wanted the parents to accept the results of these standardized tests, then I would begin by telling each parent about the test result that was most different from what the parent expected. In short, I would do something differently as a result of knowing the results of MacQuiddy's research study.

Now, you may say that I would be making a mistake to base my practice upon one study done by one person in one school system on a small sample

using only certain tests in one year. Obviously, the results of this study need to be replicated. But the basic point is that if this study is replicated, and if the results do come out the same way in these replications, then we have some firm knowledge about how counselors could act in order to bring about a given result.

One other important point: The rationale for MacCuiddy's study was based on Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory and related basic research. The results of MacCuiddy's research are relevant to the theory of cognitive dissonance and may contribute to the support or disconfirmation of certain propositions in that theory. Practical research questions should not be isolated from basic research knowledge or fundamental psychological theories but, indeed, should be relevant to them, and furthermore, should contribute to such theories as a by-product.

The division of labor that I am proposing is that we counseling psychologists use the theories and basic research of other disciplines to formulate questions, the answers to which affect counseling practice; we leave to Festinger and other theorists the problem of integrating the results of practical research in the modification of their theories.

Proposition III: Outcome Criteria of Counseling Research Should Be Tailored to the Behavior Changes Desired by the Clients and Counselors Involved.

Elsewhere I have argued that the goals of any counseling should be formulated in terms of observable behavior changes desired by both the client and the counselor (Krumboltz, 1966a, 1966b). I shall not reiterate the reasons why I consider such a formulation desirable, but the essential point here is that the goals of different counseling sessions may vary markedly. One client may wish to reduce the anxiety he experiences in connection with taking tests. Another may be concerned about his ability to form friendships. Still another may have inadequate study habits. The goals of each counseling session are different for different clients, and therefore it is impossible to apply a single criterion to evaluate counseling in its totality.

Appropriateness of the Criterion for Each Client

If we examine some of the criterion measures which have been used to evaluate counseling in recent research studies, we are impressed by the creativity involved in generating so many possible desirable outcomes of counseling. But was each possible outcome desired by the client who came to the counselor in the first place?

For example, one criterion measure is the number of constructs borrowed from the therapist. Did the client come to the counselor in order to learn to use the same terminology as the counselor's? Would the client be happy to learn that success had occurred in his case because he was now using more of the terminology of the therapist than he did in the beginning?

Another criterion measure is an enlarged time perspective. Did the client come to the counselor because he was dissatisfied with his narrow time perspective? Would he be happy to know that counseling had been judged successful with him because his time perspective had been enlarged?

Another criterion measure is the amount of participation in groups. If the client had come to the counselor because of excessive loneliness and inability to communicate with other people, and if he and the counselor agreed that it would be desirable for him to learn how to get along with other people in group situations, then I think an excellent criterion for him would be his amount of participation in groups. If, on the other hand, he came to the counselor because of an inability to manage his own time and poor study habits, then an increase in the amount of time he spent in groups might be a sign that the counseling had been a distinct failure.

Unless the criterion measure represents the kind of behavior change desired by the client and the counselor in each individual instance, the counseling of that client can not be evaluated. This means that any counseling outcome research with a group of clients must be undertaken with clients all of whom desire to make the same type of behavior change.

The Danger in Gross Criterion Measures

One of the favorite criterion measures in educational and counseling research is the ubiquitous grade point average (GPA). It seems like a

desirable criterion measure since almost everyone would like to have a higher GPA. A well designed study by Winkler, Teigland, Munger, and Kranzler (1965) illustrates the difficulty. The subjects were 121 fourth-graders, all of whom had a common problem in that they were "underachievers." They were randomly assigned to client-centered individual counseling, client-centered group counseling, a reading instruction group, a Hawthorne control group, and a no-treatment control group. The criterion measure was the amount of increase in the GPA. As you might expect, no statistically significant differences were found among these five groups, but the group that tended to show the largest increase in GPA was the no-treatment control group.

What is wrong with using a gross measure like GPA as a criterion measure in counseling?

1. GPA is dependent upon innumerable factors beyond the control of the treatment procedures. The student's inherited characteristics, his home environment, his years of education, and the already established expectancies of four or five teachers are all beyond the control of the counselor. GPA is a very difficult measure to alter under the best of circumstances. To expect a few hours of talk with another person to alter radically such an insensitive criterion measure is to be most unrealistic.

2. When grades are assigned "on the curve" (and they usually are even when the stated policy is that they are not), any improvement in one person's GPA means that someone else's GPA is probably going to decline. If an entire group is given some kind of effective treatment, the resulting improvement will not be reflected in the GPA because the teachers will still be distributing their grades in about the same proportions. The average will remain approximately the same.

3. The time required for the experimental counseling treatment subtracts from the time available for regular classroom instruction or study. In order for counseling to show any effect, it must be shown to be more valuable than an equal amount of time spent with the teacher doing the work which contributes directly to the grade point average. Thus, we are in effect

expecting teachers to give higher grades to students who have been removed from their classes than for students who have remained in their classes and done the assigned work at the time it was expected. Under these circumstances then, it should not be surprising to find that the so-called no-treatment control group might very well show the greatest improvement in grade point average.

Grade point average is only the most frequently used of gross criterion measures, but there are others, particularly those used in long range follow-up studies, which suffer from some of the same disadvantages. Here are a few examples: (1) annual average income, (2) rating by employer, and (3) self-rating of job satisfaction. All are dependent upon such a multitude of other factors that we should not be disappointed to find that the few hours we spend with a client fail to affect these measures years later. My basic point is that progress will be faster if we avoid using criterion measures of such a gross nature. Instead we should confine ourselves now to criterion measures which represent the first steps toward outcomes desired by the clients. Outcome criteria must not be trivial but must be an indication that progress is being made toward vital client goals.

Criterion Behavior External to the Counseling Situation Itself

If we are to achieve any valuable assessment of counseling outcomes, we must determine whether behavior learned in the presence of a counselor is later evidenced in the absence of that counselor. I am not at all impressed by evidence that self-references in later counseling interviews are more positive than earlier self-references. It is too easy for the counselor to selectively reinforce certain kinds of statements and, knowingly or not, increase the frequency of certain types of verbal statements within the interview itself. Truax (1966) has shown that even Carl Rogers himself selectively reinforces certain categories of verbal behavior and not others and thus affects their relative frequency in later interviews. Now we need to know whether reinforcing certain types of positive self-references affects relevant behavior outside the counseling session.

Some of the research we have done at Stanford University has attempted to evaluate the amount of career exploration activity that takes place during a three-week period of time immediately after the experimental counseling treatments. It is quite difficult to collect this kind of evidence since independent interviewers must be hired to interview students individually, asking them buffer questions, as well as the relevant questions, to disguise the purpose of the interview. Then, to determine whether the student reports of their exploratory activities are accurate, a random sample must be investigated by some small scale detective work (Krumboltz and Schroeder, 1965; Krumboltz and Thoresen, 1964). There are many difficulties with this criterion measure, but it is a type of behavior that is relevant to the reasons counseling was requested in the first place, and it is a behavior that occurs after the counseling itself has been completed.

Some Possibly Fruitful Areas for Counseling Research

While I certainly will not be all inclusive and probably will not agree with myself a year from now, I would like to suggest seven possible areas where counseling research might be profitable at the present time.

1. Alternative Ways of Establishing the Counselor as Effective Agent of Change

We have some evidence that the client's expectation that the counselor is going to be effective in helping him is related to more effective counseling. What is it that establishes the counselor as an effective and competent person to the client? Up to this point counselors have relied upon establishing a warm, permissive, nonjudgmental, understanding relationship as the *sine qua non* of counseling. When such a relationship is established, the client values the counselor most highly (cathexis or transference would have occurred in psychoanalytic terminology), and the counselor is in a position of considerable influence in the client's life. At that point, whether he wants it or not, the counselor becomes a much more powerful reinforcing agent to the client. Even minimal cues of approval or indifference become very important to the client and can influence the client's actions. Thus, establishing a warm and understanding relationship is one way of increasing

the power of the counselor as an agent of change. But are there other ways?

To what extent would it be important for the client to be made aware of the competence of the counselor in skills respected by the client? Would the counselor be more effective if the client knew that the counselor had already achieved a high degree of professional success? Would the counselor be more effective if the client were told that this counselor had had great success with problems similar to his own?

Arnold Lazarus tells of the remarkable success he had in counseling a juvenile delinquent referred by the court, a young man who was hostile and contemptuous of all Lazarus' attempts to establish a warm and understanding relationship. Progress began after a series of events provoked a fist fight, during which Lazarus modestly claims he luckily landed a telling blow which threw the youth against a file cabinet, drawing blood and temporarily stunning him. The first words spoken by the young delinquent after this encounter were, "Say, you throw a mighty right for a pen-pusher." This demonstration of pugilistic competency established Lazarus as a person highly valued by that youngster and made possible a radical transformation in this young man's behavior. Moral: There may be more than one way to establish a helping relationship.

Industrial concerns employ people competent in unrelated but prestigeful fields to give testimonials about their products; religious organizations employ successful athletes to spread the word among adolescents who respect athletic success more than theology; and so it seems conceivable that counselors known for success in areas respected by their clients may be more effective than those of equal ability who are not known for these superficially irrelevant competencies. Research on this issue could affect the way counselors are introduced to clients and the extent to which counselors reveal information about themselves.

Though it may grate on the sensitivity of some humble counselors, it may be worth asking whether some outward displays of prestige may not enhance the counselor's effectiveness. The clients of other professions seem impressed

by outward displays of prosperity, such as thick carpets on the floor, expensive furniture, spacious office and reception rooms with gracious secretaries. Professional degrees, diplomas and certificates displayed on the wall suggest to the client that the counselor is not one who arrived at his position without gaining the respect of some relevant groups.

Perhaps there are still other ways of establishing the counselor as an effective agent of change. Additional ways could be profitably explored. We have made one feeble attempt to investigate some factors which might affect the counselor's effectiveness (Krumboltz, Varenhorst, and Thoresen, in press). However, the study was confined to experimentally manipulating the apparent prestige and competency only of a model counselor presented on a video tape. No effect was apparent on students observing the tape. However, the effect of different competency levels and prestige levels of the client's own counselor could be a profitable area of investigation.

2. Learning the Skills of Building Human Relationships

One fundamental problem presented by a large number of clients concerns their ineffectiveness at developing friendships and warm human relationships of mutual trust. A traditional counselor approach to this problem has been to establish the counselor as the client's friend. If done successfully, the client is able to confide to the counselor things about himself that he is unable to communicate to any other human being. The counselor becomes an extremely important person in this client's life, and undoubtedly the experience of being so important to a client is extremely reinforcing to many counselors.

But the fundamental question is whether having such a relationship with a counselor really enables the client to learn skills in developing sound human relationships with other people. If the counselor is not careful, the client may learn nothing about establishing solid relationships with other people. Worse than that, he may learn some patterns of behavior that actually prevent him from establishing such relationships: (1) He may learn that the way to establish a good relationship is to do all the talking,

expecting the other person to do all the listening; (2) He may learn that his own personal problems are of overwhelming interest to other people while other people's problems do not seem worthy of discussion; (3) He may learn to talk about his own personal feelings without ever taking any constructive action to do anything about them; (4) If he does adopt the counselor as a model, he may think that the only way to help other people is to listen empathically to their problems. It is highly likely that all of these patterns of behavior, if transferred to his relationships with other people, may actually impede the establishment of sound relationships with other people.

We need to find out the skills and behaviors which enable human beings to establish close and satisfying relationships with each other. Then we need to discover ways to teach our clients to evidence these skills and behavior patterns so that they themselves can enjoy the satisfaction that comes with having a really good friend. Establishing such a relationship with the counselor himself could possibly facilitate this learning if handled properly, but such a relationship by itself should not be considered a desirable outcome or necessarily the only or best way that such skills can be learned. We need to examine much more clearly the ways in which solid friendships are developed, and we must take pains to teach clients how to develop solid relationships so that there is a mutual giving and receiving and not the one-sided relationship that so frequently develops in the traditional counseling interview.

3. More Effective Procedures for Helping Members of Specific Subpopulations

It appears that counselors are remarkably ineffective in dealing with certain subpopulations with whom society expects us to have some positive effect. The subpopulation known as "the culturally disadvantaged" seems remarkably immune to the traditional approaches employed by middle class counselors. The Education and Training Committee of Division 17 has been investigating this problem and has recommended that counseling psychologists give their attention to some of the research problems involved in working

more effectively with the culturally disadvantaged. An excellent article by Calia (1966) outlines some of the problems and some possible approaches to them.

Another subpopulation for which we seem ill-prepared consists of elementary school pupils. In the last session of Congress the establishment of the child development specialist was proposed. While the bill failed in this session of Congress, its mere existence is some testimony to the fact that whatever it is that counselors attempt to do, they apparently are not doing it very well in the elementary school. It is quite possible that the behavior changes for which counselors work at the secondary school level are totally inappropriate at the elementary school level. Research efforts need to establish the type of behavior change problems presented by elementary school age pupils and to investigate appropriate procedures for helping the children overcome these problems. Additional investigation is needed to determine teaching procedures, curriculum innovations, as well as counseling techniques which will enable these youngsters to unlearn their maladaptive behavior patterns and relearn more appropriate ways of coping with their environment.

4. Extrapolating From Research in Other Disciplines

Remarkable benefits seem possible by integrating counseling research with the basic research of other disciplines. Goldstein (1966) has suggested some possible ways in which social psychology can be applied to research in counseling and psychotherapy. Some of the research which shows that the expectancy of the experimenter and the expectancy of the subject may be related to actual outcome is of considerable relevance to counseling. Ways in which both counselor expectancies and client expectancies can be modified could be experimentally investigated. Goldstein suggests other possible analogous research problems stemming from social psychology research on role compatibility, interpersonal attraction, authoritarianism, cognitive dissonance, and convergence.

Another constructive possibility is the suggestion of Zytowski (1966)

for the use of therapy analogs. He suggests that many practical problems, not readily solved in the actual counseling situation, could be investigated by setting up experimental analogs in the laboratory. He reviews the evidence on a number of attempts to simulate counseling in laboratory situations. For example, instead of working with clients with real problems of anxiety it may be possible to induce artificially some temporary stress (say by making false and negative Rorschach interpretations to clients) and then experimentally investigate ways of relieving such temporary anxiety. Such laboratory investigations may be fruitful in investigating ways to reduce hostility and guilt and to increase persistence, frustration tolerance, cooperative behavior, and various opinion, attitude and value changes.

5. Building a Library of Effective Models

Many client problems are due to behavior deficits. The client simply has not learned some of the behavior patterns necessary for coping with his particular problem. Some of our research has shown that though tape-recorded models may be very effective at stimulating learning activities for some clients, they are not equally effective with all clients. For example, a tape recording which promoted the career exploration of high school boys proved ineffective for high school girls. Another video tape proved effective for the girls. Counselors could increase their effectiveness if they possessed a library of models designed to help various types of students learn various kinds of behavior. Extensive research would be needed to develop and test these models.

The job of building such a library would require the efforts of many persons over a long period of time. Research would be needed to establish that each model was effective in helping a particular group of students learn a particular pattern of behavior. The end result of many such researches would be to arm counselors across the country with a library of effective learning aids. Problems involved with matching clients and models would pose additional problems for research.

6. Improving the Career Decision Process

The one area where counselors are reputed to have unchallenged competency is in the area of helping clients investigate feasible alternatives. Many clients are unable to make realistic decisions because they have no occupational information that seems relevant to them. Much of the traditional occupational literature is difficult reading, and many of the answers are to questions students never ask. One attempt to solve this problem is to provide simulated occupational problem-solving kits (Krumboltz and Sheppard, 1966). These kits enable high school students to engage in the problem-solving activities of various types of occupations. The problems are deliberately designed to beeasy, but still realistic, so that students can solve the problems and have the feeling of success at working at a given occupation. Hopefully, students who experience these problem-solving kits will be intrigued by their experience and eager to learn more about the occupation they have experienced. Innumerable research questions arise from this kind of a project. What is the effect of the difficulty level of the problems that are posed? How does the difficulty level interact with the ability level of the students? How should the determination be made as to which particular occupational kit should be used with which students? Is is really advantageous for students to take the kit that they request, or to take a kit in an area in which they have had no experience? How many kits provide the optimum effect? These are some of the questions on which we are working now and for which we hope to provide some tentative answers in the near future.

Occupational simulation is just one way to encourage the exploration that is necessary for students to make realistic choices. Other ways need to be devised and tested to encourage students to explore their own future possibilities.

As the result of the work of a competent counselor, clients ought to be better able to engage in the total decision making process. We have considered a few of the questions involved in the first two steps of the decision

making process: posing relevant alternatives, and investigating information about these alternatives. Other steps in the decision making process include estimating the probability of success in each alternative, relating personal values to each course of action, deliberating and weighing all the factors which must be considered in eliminating from consideration the least favorable courses of action, formulating a tentative final plan of action, and then generalizing this entire decision making process to future problems.

For each of these steps in the decision making process we must ask: How can the counselor best help the student?

How shall the counselor most effectively help students estimate their probabilities of success in various alternatives that they have considered? The Palo Alto schools under the leadership of H. B. Gelatt have developed programed "experience tables" which enable high school students to estimate their probability of being accepted into different kinds of colleges on the basis of their grade point average to date. The approach appears to be effective in giving students a realistic idea of their chances for being admitted to each school. Much research will be needed to help students estimate their chances of success in various other alternatives they may consider.

How does a counselor help a student arrive at a relative ranking of his alternatives and develop a sequence of choices including alternative actions in case first choices are not reached? How does the counselor insure that this involved decision making process will be learned so that the client will use it again as he faces new problems in life?

7. Preventing Problems

Just as responsible dental authorities place high priority on instituting floridation to prevent dental problems, so counselors should begin to put high priority on ways of preventing problems of inappropriate vocational choice, inadequate social relationships, unfortunate marriages, wasted talent, and inadequate learning. At the moment we really do not know the best ways of preventing problems such as these. Since the answers to

problems of this magnitude go far beyond the confines of the counseling interview room, some counselors may not recognize their responsibility for helping to solve them. Counselors should consider the prevention of such problems to be at least as important as any of the other problems that I have already discussed. Preventing problems may involve administrative arrangements within the institutions in which we work. For example, the grading policies in many educational institutions create far more problems than they solve.

Another area of concern consists of the dating behavior of adolescents which frequently leads them to marry the wrong person for the wrong reasons. Very often young people have no opportunity, or little opportunity, to meet people with whom they might be most compatible because of the superficialities of the introductory process. Though we may be distainful of the commercial exploitation of so-called "computer dating," the possibilities of this on college campuses are being explored by a few of our more courageous colleagues. If a sound scientifically tested system could be developed through which young people could be made aware of the names of others with whom they might be compatible, perhaps one slight step would have been taken toward increasing the future happiness of a significant number of persons who would otherwise end up at the marital counseling office.

But the development of a sound preventative program must be based on the highest professional ethics, the soundest research designs, and the most noble of human motivations. Who else but counseling psychologists could provide all that!

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